

# 2026 Georgia Primary Election Recap

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20 | 7AM

## SEVERAL RACES MOVE TO RUNOFF PHASE

Tuesday, May 19, marked Georgia's 2026 Primary Election Day. As of Wednesday morning, all precincts statewide have completed their reporting, although these results have not yet been certified. Early voting data suggests turnout exceeded that of the last midterm election (2022), although this year's ballot includes high-profile contests for Governor and other state-wide candidates, which likely contributed to increased voter participation.

Several races are headed for a runoff. In any contest where a single candidate does not receive a majority of votes, the top two candidates will face off on June 16. Looking ahead to November's General Election, more than 125 incumbent state House and Senate members face an opponent. Combined with open statewide offices and congressional turnover, 2026 is one of the most dynamic election cycles in Georgia in more than a decade.

## GOVERNOR

REP: Lt. Governor **Burt Jones** (38%) and businessman and political outsider **Rick Jackson** (33%) are headed to a runoff. Jones pulled in about 55,000 more votes than Jackson. The remaining six GOP gubernatorial candidates combined for 29% of the vote, meaning those 270,000 voters could prove decisive in the runoff.

DEM: Former City of Atlanta Mayor and Biden administration official **Keisha Lance Bottoms** dominated the Democratic Primary, earning 56% of the vote in a 7-person race. Overall, voters cast 147,000 more Democratic Primary ballots than GOP Primary ballots.

## US SENATE

REP: Congressman **Mike Collins** (41%) will face football coach and attorney **Derek Dooley** (30%) later this summer to determine the GOP nominee. Congressman Buddy Carter earned 25% of the vote, but not enough to advance to the runoff.

DEM: Incumbent Senator **Jon Ossoff** ran unopposed in the Primary. Ossoff earned more than one million votes on Tuesday; by comparison, the Republican nominees pulled in a combined 912,000.

## LT. GOVERNOR

REP: Macon-based attorney **John F. Kennedy** (27%) will face off against his former colleague, Sen. **Greg Dolezal** (23%), in the runoff election. Five other candidates fell by the wayside, including Rep. David Clark, Sen. Blake Tillery, and former Sen. Steve Gooch.

DEM: The Democratic Primary is also headed to runoff, pitting Sen. **Josh McLaurin** (41%) against **Nabilah Parkes** (40%). Parkes entered the Lt. Governor's race near the close of the qualifying window in March and subsequently resigned her state Senate seat.

## STATE SUPREME COURT

Non-partisan judicial races often pass without a challenger or much media coverage. That was not the case this year, as two seats drew competitive contests.

Incumbent Supreme Court Justices **Charlie Bethel** (51%) and **Sarah Warren** (59%) defended their seats from challengers **Miracle Rankin** (49%) and **Jen Jordan** (41%), respectively.

While Rankin and Jordan frequently campaigned together as a ticket, Rankin pulled in 166,000 more votes than Jordan.

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## OTHER STATEWIDE RACES

- Attorney General: Sen. **Brian Strickland** bested Sen. **Bill Cowsert** for the GOP nominee and will face Democratic Primary victor **Tanya Miller** in November. Miller is currently the Minority Caucus Chair in the House.
- Insurance: Commissioner **John King** was unopposed in the GOP Primary. He will face either **Keisha Waites** or **DeAndre' Mathis** in the General Election.
- Secretary of State: Both parties will hold runoff elections on June 16. GOP voters will select between Rep. **Tim Fleming** and **Vernon Jones**. On the Democratic side, **Dana Barrett** and **Penny Brown Reynolds** will go head-to-head next month.
- Public Service Commission: Two of the state's five PSC seats are up for reelection in 2026. In the District 3 race, former GOP Commissioner **Fitz Johnson** eked out a Primary victory, setting up a rematch with current Democratic Commissioner **Peter Hubbard**. The GOP ballot in the District 5 race is headed for a runoff between **Bobby Mehan** and **Joshua Tolbert**. The victor will face Democrat **Shelia Edwards** in November.

## US HOUSE

Georgia has 14 congressional seats. All eleven incumbents seeking reelection were successful in their Primary. Results from the open contests are as follows:

- GA-1: GOP candidate **Jim Kingston** secured the party's nomination to replace Buddy Carter. **Joyce Griggs** and **Amanda Hollowell** will face off in June for the Democratic nomination.
- GA-10: **Houston Gaines**, current GOP member of the state House, will face Democrat **Pam Delancy** in November. The victor will replace Mike Collins.
- GA-11: The GOP race is headed for a runoff between **Rob Adkerson** and **John Cowan**. Adkerson has served as Chief of Staff to retiring Congressman Barry Loudermilk for the last 12 years. The victor will face **Chris Harden** in November.
- GA-13: Congressman David Scott had already drawn several opponents at the time of his death in April. State House member **Jasmine Clark** fought off five other Democratic Primary challengers to secure the nomination with 56% of the vote. She will face Republican **Jonathan Chavez** in November.

## STATE SENATE

All incumbents running for reelection were successful in securing their party's nomination. 25 incumbents face a General Election challenger, although only a couple of races are genuinely believed to be in play. The GOP controls 33 of the chamber's 56 seats.

There are 11 open seats this cycle, many the result of members running for statewide office, particularly Lt. Governor and Attorney General. Five of those open-seat races will head to a runoff.

## STATE HOUSE

Of the 32 incumbents with a Primary challenger, only one was defeated Tuesday – Rep. Bill Werkheiser, Chairman of the Industry and Labor Committee.

A half-dozen contests require a runoff election to finalize the November ballot. More than 100 of the chamber's 180 seats are contested in the General Election. The GOP currently controls 99 seats, though several districts are expected to be competitive in November.